



CITY OF GAITHERSBURG  
MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

January 13, 2004  
7:00-9:00 p.m.

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A meeting of the Environmental Affairs Committee was held at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall. Committee members present: Nina Baird, Dave Hondowicz, Matt Hopkins, John Hudson, Toni Hudson, and Jim Simpson. Staff present: Environmental Specialist Erica Shingara and Administrative Liaison Meredith Strider.

I. Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m.

Introduction of Mr. Mathew Hopkins, LEED certified architect, who is interested in the Environmental Affairs Committee.

II. Approval of Minutes.

Approved the Minutes of the December 9, 2003 meeting.

III. City Environmental Update.

The City' Green Building pages are now up online, including new information on the Green Building Incentive Program, brochures, and a link to the MEA tax credit website.

The Gaithersburg Youth Center is registered with the USGBC. Project information is available on their website under "registered projects".

The Sensitive Areas Element of the Master Plan has been renamed the Environment Element because it is a more comprehensive assessment of both natural resources and the urban environment. Committee and staff comments on the draft have been received, and staff is compiling the comments and revising the document accordingly.

The City is beginning to make budget plans for FY05. A public forum will be held on February 5<sup>th</sup> to allow citizens the opportunity to comment on funding. The snow date is February 18<sup>th</sup> in case of inclement weather.

The Public Hearing on the budget is scheduled for April 19<sup>th</sup>.

The Mayor and City Council Retreat to discuss the Strategic Plan and budget process will be held on January 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>.

Staff is working with CPJ to purchase SWM inspections software which will help the City comply with NPDES Phase II requirement under the Clean Water Act.

January 29<sup>th</sup> is the State of the City Dinner. Guests should register at 6:30 p.m.; dinner is at 7:00.

Staff is completing applications for MDE's stormwater management retrofit and stream restoration cost share programs to fund the construction component of future enhancement projects.

Environmental Specialist Shingara will be on vacation next week and will return Jan. 27<sup>th</sup>.

IV. EAC Mission Statement.

The Mission Statement and Goals are ready to post on the website.

V. Restaurant and Bar Smoking Ban.

Erica Shingara distributed the results of the City's business survey and research on ban alternatives.

There are four options that the City is considering:

1. The City's own ban similar to the County's, with no smoking permitted in private clubs;
2. A ban similar to the County's, where smoking restaurants with separate ventilation systems will have a one year phase-out before they fall under the ban;
3. A modified Howard County ban where smoking restaurants would have to comply with ventilation requirements; or
4. Tillie-Frank, where the County ban would apply in the City, and the County would also enforce it.

The Committee would like to inform the Council that a total ban is ideal, and would give support to option 1 or

4. The Committee believes that the City should pass legislation as quickly as possible to resolve this issue.

Action Item: Erica Shingara will notify the Council of the Committee's opinion through Assistant City Manager Fred Felton.

VI. Environmental Awareness Week/Awards Program.

Environmental Awareness week will take place in April, and the City will host awards for environmental excellence. Events include an Arbor Day celebration, community and stream clean-ups, etc.

A tentative date is set for the week of April 26-May 1.

The awards ceremony would take place on April 26<sup>th</sup> before the regular City Council meeting. Letters should be sent out about 2 weeks from now. Letters should be revised from last year and sent to City businesses, schools, and HOAs.

Possible activities for the week include an event at the Youth Center on Wednesday, an Arbor Day celebration on Tuesday or Thursday, an activity at Gaithersburg Middle School on Friday, and Community Cleanup Day on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

John Hudson expressed an interest in organizing an Environmental Affairs booth at Olde Towne Day this September. Preparations need to start shortly to have everything ready for this event.

As part of environmental awareness, the Committee is interested in starting a program at a school (possibly Gaithersburg Middle School) to educate students about green building, water efficiency, household chemicals, and other responsible environmental practices. The Committee should contact the school about putting together a curriculum for an environmental program at the school, and doing a pilot during environmental awareness week.

Action Item: Bring ideas for this program and the curriculum to the next meeting.

VII. Local Air Quality.

Local Air Quality will be held off until the next agenda, where Rachel can attend the meeting.

John Hudson inquired about Gaithersburg's participation in the wind power co-op, buying power for government buildings.

VIII. Youth Environmental Stewardship Program.

Working with web developer to include information on the City's webpage. The program is still referred to as a "stewardship" program due to its relation to existing grant funded programs.

The City will be a clearinghouse of information, with the website used as a tool to post and distribute information. Post past activities to give people ideas.

We will give contacts information for MDE, Montgomery County, DEP, DNR, Izaak Walton League, Audubon Society, Sierra Club, and other organizations.

IX. Green Building.

The green building pages are now up on the website.

The County is pursuing their own incentive program.

The Teen Center is expected to attain LEED certification.

There have not been any new projects, but everyone is required to fill out the LEED checklist.

The City needs to be prepared to be very progressive in the Green building area and give 'green' suggestions in

various projects to promote the concept.

Action item: Include Nina's research on Green Building technical information in the existing LEED Summary document.

X. EAC Webpage and Minutes.

Action item: Update Environmental Affairs Committee webpage with mission statement.

Action item: Investigate providing minutes in .PDF format; otherwise, submit an email request to receive minutes.

XI. New business.

Dates for the strawbale house tour: February 1; February 14 & 15 (holiday), February 21 & 22, February 28; it will be about 30 minutes, fairly short; in Frederick by Francis Scott Key Mall. The Committee could possibly invite the Mayor & Council.

Action Item: John & Toni Hudson will send out a memo about possible dates. Committee members should respond by January 25<sup>th</sup> with selected date.

The DC Clean Air Forum is on January 22.

XII. Next meeting.

Date: Tuesday, February 10 at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda items: Local Air Quality, Sustainable Environment Areas Master Plan Element, R&B Smoking Ban, Youth Environmental Stewardship Program, Green Building Progress.

XIII. Adjourned at 8:25 p.m.